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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/WE (ELAINE SAMSON AND STACIE ZERDECKI)

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [GG](#) [RS](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPAIN TO STUDY U.S. PROPOSALS ON GEORGIA

REF: STATE 134559

Classified By: DCM Arnold Chacon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On January 7, Deputy Chief of Mission Chacon shared the U.S. position regarding the way forward with Georgia's separatist regions with Spanish MFA Director General for Europe (non-UE) and North America Felipe Fernandez de la Pena. The DCM outlined the proposal, noting that A/S Fried would be in Prague January 8 and sought to discuss the European views on the issue and seek support for the U.S. approach.

¶2. (C) Fernandez welcomed the opportunity for consultation and reviewed the Spanish/EU approach to Georgia, stating that Spain shares the U.S. goal of restoring Georgia's territorial integrity. On principle, he added, the GOS has consistently rejected unilateral declarations of independence, whether in Georgia or Kosovo. Fernandez said that Spain will continue to address post-conflict Georgia within the EU framework - pointing to the EU's active, successful role in brokering a cessation to the hostilities - and specifically via the EU monitoring mission, in which Spain is a participant. Spain also continues to develop a negotiating mechanism aimed at preventing future incidents, he said, and strongly supports the development of an inquiry mission to determine the causes of this conflict. Spain is promoting a third round of Geneva discussions despite the ongoing political differences and difficulties, Fernandez said, in order to maintain regional stability and focus on humanitarian concerns, the most urgent of which is the safe return of refugees and displaced persons. To this end, Fernandez added, and having the Council of Europe "chairmanship," Spain is working within the Council on a plan of action for Georgia, focusing on human rights and refugees. He concluded adding that Russia's December 22 decision to block the extension of OSCE's Georgia mission was unfortunate.

¶3. (C) When asked whether Spain would support the U.S. "carrot and stick" approach, Fernandez said that the GOS would further study the U.S. position and that to the extent the plan was compatible with Geneva discussions, the GOS could support it. That said, Fernandez added, Spain wants the separatists to continue to have input in the Geneva process and showed concern for potentially negative consequences of targeted sanctions and visa bans on their future engagement. He said that Spain agrees, however, that there must be a long term strategy aimed at reintegrating separatist regions in Georgia, specifically promoting economic and development packages as a means to spur serious negotiations with Tbilisi.

AGUIRRE